

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action of August 9, 2006 (hereinafter Office Action). As this response is timely filed before the expiration of the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due. The Office is expressly authorized, however, to charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

In the Office Action, Claim 11 was allowed. Claim 5 was indicated as being allowable, but objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Claims 1, 3, 6, 8-10, 12, 14, 16-17, and 19-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,029,214 to Dorfman, *et al.* (hereinafter Dorfman) in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,411,283 to Murphy (hereinafter Murphy). Claims 4, 7, 15, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dorfman in view of Murphy and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,677,710 to Thompson-Rohrlich (hereinafter Thompson-Rohrlich).

As an initial matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the allowability of the subject matter presented in Claims 11. At page 6 of the Office Action it is stated that Claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and all intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 to include the limitations of Claim 5 as well as those of intervening Claim 3. Claims 3 and 5 have been cancelled. Similarly, independent Claim 12 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 14 as well as limitations equivalent to those recited in Claim 5. Claim 14 has been cancelled. No new matter is introduced by the claim amendments.

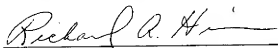
Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that independent Claims 1 and 12, as amended, define over the prior art. Applicants further respectfully submit that, whereas the remaining claims each dependent from one of the amended independent claims while reciting additional features, the remaining claims likewise define over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. The Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gregory A. Nelson, Registration No. 30,577
Richard A. Hinson, Registration No. 47,652
Eduardo J. Quiñones, Registration No. 58,575
AKERMAN SENTERFITT
Customer No. 40987
Post Office Box 3188
West Palm Beach, FL 33402-3188
Telephone: (561) 653-5000